

KCTCS GOOD NEWS REPORT

HIGHER EDUCATION BEGINS HERE

OCTOBER 2015



BANDING TOGETHER

GRANT BOOSTS BROADBAND ACCESS TO EASTERN KENTUCKY

The Appalachian Regional Commission recently announced \$1 million in grants for the construction of the Broadband Technology Center on the Pikeville campus of Big Sandy Community and Technical College (BSCTC). The \$1 million is comprised of a \$500,000 grant from the Appalachian Regional Commission and a \$500,000 Community Development Block Grant (CDBG).

“KCTCS has an extensive footprint in the eastern part of the state with five colleges and 24 campuses that are an integral part of the region’s economic development efforts,” said KCTCS President Jay K. Box. “We are committed to bringing our sizable resources together to assist SOAR in their vision of advancing the quality of life in eastern Kentucky.”

Five KCTCS colleges in the region partnering with the SOAR initiative include: Ashland Community and Technical College, Big Sandy Community and Technical College, Hazard Community and Technical College, Somerset Community College and Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College.

ABOVE: KCTCS and SOAR partners (L-R) President Devin Stephenson, Big Sandy Community and Technical College; President Kay Adkins, Ashland Community and Technical College; Dr. Larry Ferguson, KCTCS vice chancellor of economic development and workforce solutions; President Lynn Moore, Southeast Kentucky Community and Technical College; President Jay Box, KCTCS; Jim Host, SOAR Executive Board member; Jared Arnett, SOAR Executive Director; President Jo Marshall, Somerset Community College; President Steve Greiner, Hazard Community and Technical College.



KENTUCKY COMMUNITY & TECHNICAL COLLEGE SYSTEM

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ABOVE, LEFT: Congressman Hal Rogers and Governor Steve Beshear were moved by student testimonials during a SOAR Executive Board meeting on October 5 on the Prestonsburg campus of BSCTC. Pictured (L-R): BSCTC President Devin Stephenson, Congressman Rogers, Charles Scarberry, Tate Greene, Dakota Collins, Maria Wilson, David Goode, Dustin Marsh and Gov. Beshear.

ABOVE, RIGHT: BSCTC President Devin Stephenson with Congressman Hal Rogers following an announcement of grants in Somerset on Oct. 15.



SOAR was established in 2013 by Gov. Steve Beshear and Congressman Hal Rogers to address the significant challenges confronting Appalachian Kentucky. Its mission is to advance and promote a resilient and diverse eastern Kentucky economy by providing leadership, vision and collaborative partnerships to support innovative regional practices and enhance public and private investments.

“We have embraced the vision put forth by Congressman Rogers and Governor Beshear,” said BSCTC President Devin Stephenson. “The Broadband Technology Center will serve as a catalyst to community and economic development in Eastern Kentucky, and it will serve as the standard for broadband and fiber optic training in the southeast United States.”

To date, BSCTC has secured more than \$3.2 million in grant funding for the \$4.5 million project. In early October, the U.S. Economic Development Agency awarded more than \$2.2 million for the project.

The Broadband Technology Center will be a 45,000-square-foot facility that will house BSCTC’s Fiber Optic Training, Fast Track IT and computer information technology programs. The college was the first in Eastern Kentucky to start a certified fiber optic training program endorsed by the Fiber Optic Association. The program has attracted national attention and students have enrolled from multiple states. Through an innovative stackable credential model, students can work toward an associate degree.

In addition to computer information programs, the five partnering KCTCS colleges will assist SOAR communities in creating and fostering local entrepreneurial enterprises. It is predicted that most new jobs in the region will be created by entrepreneurs and KCTCS currently serves as both a leader and catalyst for assisting fledgling businesses with both their training and professional development needs.

The KCTCS-TRAINS program will serve as an important tool to support both current and new employers in the region. It is part of the Kentucky Skills Network, which is a partnership between the Cabinet for Economic Development, Kentucky Career Center, Labor Cabinet and KCTCS. Through KCTCS TRAINS, companies are provided with funding to defray the costs of training and assessment services for current and potential employees to keep them competitive.

KCTCS will also support SOAR by using its many communication platforms to encourage prospective college students to enroll in programs and entrepreneurship courses that are aligned with the initiative and designed to transform the region’s economy.

